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CIA Deputy Says Problems Not 'C

By Mickey Sandlin

Congressional investigations into activities of the Central Intelligence Agency have not been "catastrophic," but have made the agency's job tougher.

That view was expressed by Lt. Gen. Vernon Walters, deputy director of the CIA, as he addressed some 500 Oklahoma high school and college students during a government workshop Friday at Oklahoma Christian College.

"I would like to tell you it's been catastrophic, but it hasn't been," Walters said during the conference sponsored by Sen. Dewey Bartlett, R-Okla.

"We're doing a much better job than I thought we would," Walters said.

He admitted there have been abuses within the CIA, but added they have been badly "distorted."

Most of the abuses were halted by the agency before the recent wave of investigations began, he said, adding many allegations only represented internal discussion which was never put into action.

The CIA has never engaged in assassinations during its 27-year history, Walters claimed.

Drug experiments, he added, represented the agency's effort to counter "mind-bending drugs" believed used by enemies of the United States.

"We understand secrecy should not be used to cover abuses," Walters said.

However, intelligence gathering is still essential because the strength and quality of Soviet military forces is higher than ever before, he said, noting "tomorrow China will have its capability."

Congressional regulation of the CIA should take the form of a single joint committee composed of members of both houses of Congress, much like the Atomic Energy Commission, Walters said.

Reports of CIA recruitment of troops to fight Soviet and Cuban-backed forces in Angola were false, he added.

Walters said the CIA has maintained no permanent agents in Angola, nor were American troops ever in the area.

The CIA official described recent publication of names of CIA agents in Counter Spy magazine as merely "letting people finger their fellow citizens for assassination."

"It hasn't made it any easier," Walters said, referring to the publication. "You've just got to tough it out."

Walters added he knows of no agent whose name has been published who has requested a transfer.

The CIA receives less than 1 per cent of every dollar spent by the national government, which represents the smallest portion of the U. S. budget spent on the agency in 20 years, Walters said.

Manpower of the agency has dropped 40 per cent in the last six years, yet the CIA's mission has become increasingly more complex, he said.

Unless the nation maintains its "eyes to see and ears to hear," the United States could face nuclear blackmail in the future, Walters said.

"We will do our part in intelligence to make sure our country is not surprised," he said.

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Lt. Gen. Vernon Walters

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